THE SALT LAKE HERALD.

SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH, SUNDAY, JULY 1, 1906

MAGAZINE SECTION.

ENGLAND'S CRUELTY IN INDIA.

By William Jennings Bryan

"What is truth?" asked Pilate, and when he asked the question he went out without waiting for an answer. The question has been asked many times and answered in many different ways. I was reminded of a similar question when I read over the door of a court house in Aligarh, India, the motto: "Justice is the strength of the British empire."

No empire, no government, no society can have any other source of permanent strength. Lord Salisbury is quoted by Indian leaders as saying: "Injustice will bring down the mightiest to ruin," and we all believe it. Wendell Phillips expressed it as strongly and even more beautifully when he said (I quote from memory): "You may build your capitals until they reach the skies, but if they rest upon injustice, the pulse of a woman will beat them down."

But what is justice? How varied are the answers given! The subject in the name of justice, presents his appeal to his king, and the sovereign, if he be a despot, may send him to exile or the prison or the block, and do it in the name of justice. What is justice? This question has been ringing in my ears during our journey through India.

When I was a law student, I read the speech of Sheridan at the trial of Warren Hastings, and that masterpiece of invective was recalled sixteen years later, when a colonial policy began to be suggested in the United States after the taking of Manila, and I tried to inform myself in regard to British rule in India. The more I read about it, the more unjust it seemed. So many Americans have, however, during the last few years spoken admirably of England's colonial system that I have looked forward to the visit to India with increasing interest because of the opportunity it would give me to study at close range a question of vital importance to our country.

I have met some of the leading English officials, as well as a number in subordinate positions; have talked with educated Indians—Hindus, Mohammedans and Parsees; have seen the people, rich and poor, in the cities and in the country, and have examined statistics and read speeches, reports, petitions and other literature that does not find its way to the United States; and British rule in India is far worse, far more burdensome to the people and far more unjust—if I understand the meaning of the word—than I had supposed.

When I say this I do not mean to bring an indictment against the English people or to assert that they are guilty of international wrongdoing. Neither do I mean to question the motives of those who are in authority. It has been my good fortune to become personally acquainted with Lord Minto, the present viceroy, with Lieutenant Governor Frazier, the chief executive of the province of Bengal, with Lieutenant Governor La Touche, chief executive of the united provinces of Agra and Oudh, and with Governor Lamington, chief executive of the Bombay presidency, three of the largest Indian states. These men, I am sure, represent the highest type of their countrymen. Lord Minto is fresh from Canada, where he was governor general; Governor Lamington was the head of the Australian government before coming to India, and both Governors Frazier and La Touche have long official experience to their credit. That they will be just, as they understand justice, and do right, as they see the right, I am satisfied. But what is justice?

The trouble is that England acquired India for England's advantage, not for India's, and that she holds India for England's benefit, not for India's. She administers India with an eye to England's interests, not India's, and she passes upon every question as a judge would were he permitted to decide his own case. The officials in India owe their appointment directly or indirectly to the home government, and the home government holds authority at the sufferance of the people of England, not of the people of India. The officials who go out from England to serve a certain time, and then return, whose interests are in England, rather than in India, and whose sympathies are naturally with the British, rather than with the natives, cannot be expected to view questions from the same standpoint as the Indians. Neither can these officials be expected to know the needs of the people as well as those who share their daily life and aspirations.

* * *

It is not necessary to review the earlier rule under the East India company; that is sufficiently condemned by public record. The company was chartered for commercial purposes, and its rule had no other than a pecuniary aim. It secured control of state after state by helping one native prince against another where it did not actually instigate war between princes. The English government finally took the colony over, confessedly because of the outrageous conduct of the company's officials. No one now defends the rule of the East India company, although Warren Hastings was finally acquitted by the house of lords in spite of his crimes, out of consideration for his public service in extending English authority.

Is English rule in India just, as we find it today? Fortunately England permits free speech in England, although she has sometimes restricted it in her colonies, and there has not been a public question under consideration in England for a century which has not brought out independent opinion. It is the glory of England that she was an early champion of freedom of speech, and it is the glory of Englishmen that they criticise their own government when they think it wrong. During the American revolution Burke thundered his defense of the rights of the colonists, and Walpole warned his countrymen that they could not destroy American liberty without asserting principles which, if carried out, would destroy English liberty as well.

During the recent war in South Africa the British had no more severe critics than were to be found among her own people and in her own parliament. And so today British rule in India is as forcibly arraigned by Englishmen as by the Indians themselves. While Mr. Naoroji, an Indian, goes to England and secures from a meeting of a radical club the adoption of a resolution reciting that as "Britain has appropriated thousands of millions of India's wealth for building up and maintaining her British Indian empire and for drawing directly vast wealth to herself;" that as "she is continuing to drain about £30,000,000 of India's wealth every year unceasingly in a variety of ways," and that as "she has thereby reduced the bulk of the Indian population to extreme poverty, destitution and degradation; it is therefore her bounden duty in common justice and humanity to pay from her own exchequer the costs of all famines and diseases caused by such impoverishment." And further, "that it is most humiliating and discreditable to the British name that other countries should be appealed to or should have to come to Britain's help for relief of Britain's own subjects, and after and by her un-British rule of about 150 years."

While, I repeat, Mr. Naoroji was securing the unanimous adoption of the above resolution in England, Sir Henry Cotton, now a member of parliament, but for thirty-five years a member of the Indian civil service, was preparing his book, New India, in which he courageously points out the injustice from which India now suffers. Neither he nor Mr. Naoroji suggests Indian independence. Both believe that English sovereignty should continue, but Mr. Cotton shows the wrongs now inflicted upon India and the necessity for reform.

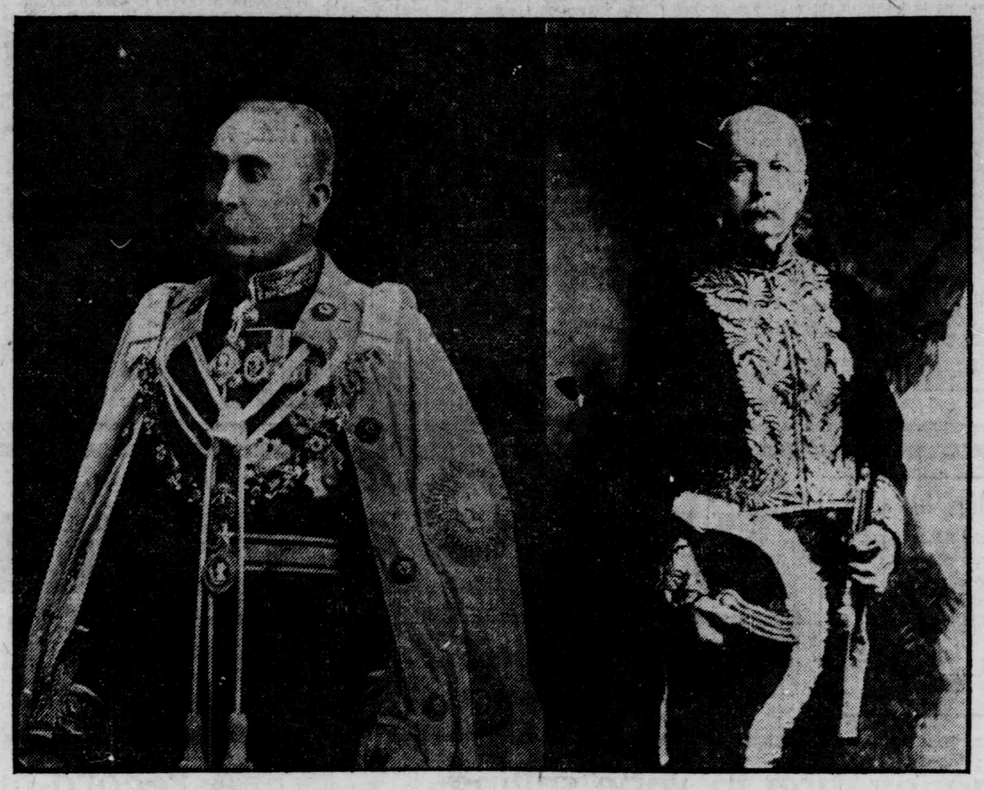
Not only does he charge that the promises of the queen have been ignored and Indians excluded from service for which they were fitted, but he charges that the antagonism between the officials and the people is growing and that there is among civilian magistrates "an undoubted tendency to inflict severe sentences when natives of India are concerned, and to impose light and sometimes inadequate punishment upon offenders of their own race," and that in trials "in which Englishmen are tried by English juries" the result is sometimes "a failure of justice not falling short of judicial scandal." If justice cannot be found in the courts, where shall she be sought?

After the Indian mutiny the queen in a proclamation promised that natives should be freely and impartially admitted to offices, "the duties of which they might be qualified by their education, ability and integrity to discharge." Lord Lytton, a viceroy of India, in a confidential document which got into print, speaking of the pledges of the sovereign and the parliament of England, said: "We all know that these claims and expectations never can or will be fulfilled. We have had to choose between prohibiting them (the natives of India) and cheating them, and we have chosen the least straightforward course," and again: "Since I am writing confidentially, I do not hesitate to say that both the governments of England and of India appear to me, up to the present moment, unable to answer satisfactorily the charge of having taken every means in their power of breaking to the heart the words of promise they had uttered to the ear."

* * *

The government of India is as arbitrary and despotic as the government of Russia ever was, and in two respects it is worse. First, it is administered by an alien people, whereas the officials of Russia are Russians. Second, it drains a large part of the taxes out of the country, whereas the Russian government spends at home the money which it collects from the people. A third disadvantage might be named, since the czar has already created a legislative body, whereas England continues to deny to the Indians any form of representative or constitutional government.

The people of India are taxed, but they have no voice in the amount to be collected or in the use to be made



His Excellency the Earl of Minto. His Honor Sir Andrew Frazer.

of the revenue. They pay into the government nearly $225,000,000 a year, and of this nearly $100,000,000 is expended upon an army in which Indians cannot be officers. It is not necessary to keep such an army merely to hold the people in subjection if the Indians are really satisfied with English rule, and if the army is intended to keep Russia from taking India, as is sometimes claimed, why should not the British government bear a part of the burden? Would it not be wiser to so attach the Indian people to the British government that they would themselves resist annexation to Russia?

The home charges, as they are called, absorb practically one-third of the entire revenues. About $100,000,000 goes out of India to England every year, and over $15,000,000 is paid to European officials in the civil employ. What nation could stand such a strain without impoverishment?

Taxation is nearly twice as heavy in India as in England in proportion to the income of the people. Compared with the people of other countries, the Indian's income is, on an average, one-twentieth of the average English income, one-seventh of the average Spaniard's income, one-sixth of the average Italian's income, one-fifth of the (European) Russian's income, and one-half of the income of the Turk. Sir Henry Cotton shows that the average per capita deposit in banks in England is $100, while the average per capita deposit in India is 50 cents; but how can the Indian be expected to have a large bank account when the average yearly income is only $10? I have, in another article, referred to the jewelry worn by Indian women. The bracelets and anklets are silver, except among the poorest, and this was formerly a form of hoarding, but the suspension of coinage of silver deprived the people of the privilege of converting this hoarded silver into rupees.

It will be remembered that the late Senator Walcott, a member of the monetary commission appointed by President McKinley in 1897, on his return from Europe, declared that the suspension of the coinage of silver in India had reduced the value of the savings of the people to the amount of $500,000,000. The suspension was carried out for the benefit of European interests regardless of the welfare of the masses.

So great has been the drain, the injustice to the people and the tax upon the resources of the country, that famines have increased in frequency and severity. Mr. Gokhale, one of the ablest of India's public men, presided over the meeting of the last Indian national congress (held in December) and declared in his opening speech that the death rate had steadily risen from 24 to the 1,000 in 1882-4 to 30 in 1892-4, and to 34 at the present time. I have more than once within the last month heard of the plague referred to as a providential remedy for over-population. Think of it, British rule justified because "it keeps the people from killing each other," and the plague praised because it removes those whom the government has saved from slaughter!

The railroads with all their advantages have been charged with adding to the weight of famine by carrying away the surplus grain in good years, leaving no residue for the years of drought. While grain can now be carried back more easily in times of scarcity, the people are too poor to buy it with two freights added. The storage of grain by the government at central points until the new crop is safe would bring some relief, but it has not been attempted.

If it is argued that the railroads have raised the price of grain in the interior by furnishing a cheaper outlet to the sea, it must be remembered that the benefit has accrued not to the people, nearly all of whom are tenants, but to the landlords, the government being the largest holder.

Not only are the people being impoverished, but the land is being worn out. Manure which ought to be used to renew the fields is consumed as fuel, and no sight is more common in India than that of women and children gathering manure from the roads with their hands. This, when mixed with straw and sun-dried, is used in the place of wood, and from the amount of it carried in baskets, it must be one of the chief articles of merchandise. There are now large tracts of useless land that might be brought under cultivation if the irrigation system were extended. Proof of this is to be found in the fact that the government of India has already approved of extensions which, when made, will protect 7,000,000 acres, and irrigate 3,000,000 acres. The estimated cost of these extensions is about $45,000,000, and the plans are to be carried out "as funds can be provided." Ten per cent of the army expenditure, applied to irrigation, would complete the system within five years, but instead of reducing the military expenses, they were increased more than $10,000,000 between 1904 and 1905.

Of the total amount raised from taxation each year about 40 per cent is raised from land, and the rate is so heavy that the people cannot save enough when the crops are good to feed themselves when the crops are bad. More than 10 per cent of the total tax is collected on salt, which now pays about five-eighths of a cent per pound. This is not only a heavy rate, when compared with the original cost of the salt, but it is especially burdensome to the poor. The salt tax has been as high as one cent a pound, and when at that rate materially reduced the amount of salt consumed by the people.

The poverty of the people of India is distressing in the extreme; millions live on the verge of starvation all the time, and one would think that their very appearance would plead successfully in their behalf.

* * *

The economic wrong done to the people of India explains the political wrong done to them. For more than twenty years an Indian national congress has been pleading for a modified form of representative government—not for a severing of the tie that binds India to Great Britain, but for an increased voice in their local affairs. But this request cannot be granted. Why? Because a local government composed of natives selected by the people would protest against so large an army, reduce the taxes and put Indians at lower salaries into places now held by Europeans.

It is the fear of what an Indian local government would do that prevents the experiment, although two other reasons, both insufficient, are given. One of these is that the Indian people are not intelligent enough and that they must be protected from themselves by denying them a voice in their own affairs. The other is that the Indians are so divided into tribes and religious sects that they cannot act harmoniously together. The first argument will not impress any unprejudiced traveler who has come into contact with the educated classes. There are enough informed, college trained, men in India, not to speak of those who, like our own ancestors a few centuries ago, have practical sense and good judgment without book-learning, to guide public opinion. While the percentage of literacy is deplorably small, the total number of educated men is really considerable, and there are at this time 17,000 students above the secondary schools and studying for the B. A. degree. There is not a district of any considerable size that has not some intelligent men in it, and these could be relied upon to direct the government until a larger number are qualified to assist. It is true that native princes have often seemed indifferent to the welfare of their subjects—princes who have lived in great luxury while the people have been neglected, but today some of the native states vie with those controlled by European officials in education and material advancement. And is not the very fact that the people are left under the government of native princes proof that in all the states the government could be administered without the aid of so large a number of Europeans?

The second argument is equally unsound. To say that the Indians would necessarily fight among themselves is to ignore the progress of the world. There was a time when Europe was the scene of bloody religious wars, and our country is indebted to the persecution of the Pilgrims in England for some of its best pioneers. There has been a growth in religious tolerance during the last century, and this is as noticeable in India as elsewhere. Already the intellectual leaders of all the sects and elements of the Indian population are mingling in congresses, conferences and public meetings. Already a national spirit is growing which, like the national spirit in England and America, disregards religious lines and emphasizes more and more the broad social needs which are common to all; and with the increase of general education there will be still more unity and national sentiment. Those who make this argument also forget that as long as England maintains sovereignty it will be impossible for religious differences to lead to war and that differences in council and in congress would strengthen rather than weaken her position.

* * *

But why is there a lack of intelligence among the Indians? Have they not had the blessings of British rule for several generations? Why have they not been fitted for self-government? Gladstone, whose greatness of head and heart shed a luster upon all Europe, said: "It is liberty alone which fits men for liberty. This proposition, like every other in politics, has its bounds; but it is far safer than the counter doctrine, wait till they are fit."

How long will it take to fit the Indians for self-government when they are denied the benefits of experience? They are excluded from the higher civil service (ostensibly open to them) by a cunningly devised system of examinations which make it impossible for them to enter. Not only are the people thus robbed of opportunities which rightfully belong to them, but the country is deprived of the accumulated wisdom that would come with service, for the alien officials return to Europe at the end of their service, carrying back their wisdom and earnings, not to speak of the pensions which they then begin to draw.

The illiteracy of the Indian people is a disgrace to the proud nation which for a century and a half has controlled their destiny. The editor of the Indian World, a Calcutta magazine, says in last February's number:

"If India has not yet been fit for free institutions, it is certainly not her fault. If, after one and a half centuries of British rule, India remains where she was in the middle ages, what a sad commentary must it be upon the civilizing influences of that rule! When the English came to India this country was the leader of Asiatic civilization and the undisputed center of light in the Asiatic world. Japan was then nowhere. Now, in fifty years, Japan has revolutionized her history with the aid of modern arts of progress, and India, with 150 years of English rule, is still condemned to tutelage."

Who will answer the argument presented by this Indian editor? And he might have made it stronger. Japan, the arbiter of her own destiny and the guardian of her own people, has in half a century bounded from illiteracy to a position where 90 per cent of her people can read and write, and is now thought worthy to enter into an Anglo-Japanese alliance, while India, condemned to political servitude and sacrificed for the commercial advantage of another nation, still sits in darkness, less than one per cent of her women able to read and write, and less than ten per cent of her total population sufficiently advanced to communicate with each other by letter or to gather knowledge from the printed page. In the speech above referred to, Mr. Gokhale estimates that four villages out of every five are without a schoolhouse, and this, too, in a country where the people stagger under an enormous burden of taxation. The published statement for 1904-5 shows that the general government appropriated but $6,500,000 for education, while more than $90,000,000 were appropriated for "army services," and the revised estimate for the next year shows an increase of a little more than $500,000 for education while the army received an increase of more than $12,000,000.

The government has, it is true, built a number of colleges (with money raised by taxation), and it is gradually extending the system of primary and secondary schools (also with taxes), but the progress is exceedingly slow, and the number of schools grossly inadequate. Benevolent Englishmen have also aided the cause of education by establishing private schools and colleges under church and other control, but the amount returned to India in this way is insignificant, when compared with the amount annually drawn by England from India.

It is not scarcity of money that delays the spread of education in India, but the deliberate misappropriation of taxes collected and the system which permits this disregard of the welfare of the subjects and the subordination of their industries to the supposed advancement of another nation's trade is as indefensible upon political and economic grounds as upon moral grounds.

If more attention were given to the intellectual progress of the people and more regard shown for their wishes, it would not require many soldiers to compel loyalty to England; neither would it require a large army to preserve peace and order. If agriculture were protected and encouraged, and native industries built up and diversified, England's commerce with India would be greater, for prosperous people would buy more than can be sold to India today, when so many of her sons and daughters are like walking shadows.

Lord Curzon, the most brilliant of India's viceroys of recent years, inaugurated a policy of reaction. He not only divided Bengal with a view to lessening the political influence of the great province, but he adopted an educational system which the Indians believe was intended to discourage higher education among the native population. The result, however, was exactly the opposite of that which was intended. It aroused the Indians and made them conscious of the possession of powers which they had not before employed. As the cold autumn wind scatters winged seeds far and wide, so Lord Curzon's administration spread the seeds of a national sentiment, and there is more life in India today, and therefore more hope, than there has been ever before. So high has feeling run against the government that there has been an attempted boycott of English made goods, and there is now a well organized movement to encourage the use of goods made in India.

Let no one cite India as an argument in defense of colonialism. On the Ganges and the Indus the Briton, in spite of his many noble qualities, and his large contributions to the world's advancement, has demonstrated, as many have before, man's inability to exercise with wisdom and justice, irresponsible power over helpless people. He has conferred some benefits upon India, but he has extorted a tremendous price for them.

While he has boasted or bringing peace to the living, he has led millions to the peace of the grave; while he has dwelt upon order established between warring troops, he has impoverished the country by legalized pillage. Pillage is a strong word, but no refinement of language can purge the present system of its iniquity. How long will it be before the quickened conscience of England's Christian people will heed the petition that swells up from fettered India and apply to Britain's greatest colony the doctrines of human brotherhood that have given to the Anglo-Saxon race the prestige that it enjoys?

A FAIR UPSETTER OF CUSTOMS.

By Charles Fleming Embree.

When Baxter Wilhite won the long jump on the athletic field at the State university he was thinking about Kate McLean. Just before starting on the run he had torn a dark red cap from his head and thrown it down. That was absent-mindedness, but it piqued Kate, because she had bought that cap for him and embroidered a highly original swirl of fraternity colors on it. It was just like Baxter to throw it right down in the dirt at the critical moment.

So that was the end of his hopes for a drive with her before he went home to Fort Wayne and she returned to Princeton for the summer. She was a lively creature, with sparkling black eyes, a nose turned up a trifle saucily and a tender mouth. She had gone to her room in the dumps after that long jump, and he sat for two hours in the parlor of her boarding house trying in vain to get a sight of her. Then, train time coming, he went to Fort Wayne, sorrowful, puzzled and absent-minded as ever. Just as he entered his father's house he remembered the cap.

He stopped and stared at a tree with his tongue in his cheek, then smote his thigh.

The elder Wilhite manufactured famous cook stoves and ranges. Baxter, having given his mother a bear-like hug and illuminated her day with his smile, strode into the factory office and lighted that up also.

"I tell you, Samson," his father was saying, "Buck Brothers are outdoing us in the southern part of the state. Now this lively firm in Princeton is making that another centre. And there they go, sweeping us out with their old lead ranges."

Samson swore under his breath, looking over an order. It was at this moment that a thought sprang up in Baxter's revery.

"If that's all," said he, mildly. When his big voice became mild it held a charm.

"What do you know about it?" sniffed Samson.

"If you don't mind," said Baxter, nonchalantly, "I'll spend the summer winning back that trade. Princeton, you said?"

"If you can win New Albany and Princeton you have the wedge well in," said old Wilhite, looking with pessimistic interest on Baxter. "How would you do it, now?"

"Give me the biggest spring wagon you can find and ship us to—Princeton, you said? Send some ranges ahead, and let me have Tarsus, the negro cook. We'll bake biscuits in public."

Samson had sat down pained. "Try me!" cried Baxter.

Mr. Wilhite, pleased at the genius of his son, heard further details; then, in spite of the frigidity of Samson, and not feeling very trustful himself, he suddenly agreed.

II.

"Kate! Kate McLean!" called the unapproving voice of that girl's stepmother at the foot of the staircase.

"Yes, yes," came down Kate's impatient reply.

"Are you dressing up, miss, to go out again with those undignified girls?"

"Mother, I wouldn't quarrel with you all the time if you would only be good!" Kate called. She was tying a red ribbon round her neck, and her merrior cast back at her the prettiest thing she had ever seen.

"Are you going out traipsing, in spite of my wish?" asked Mrs. McLean.

"You have on your gayest hat yourself, mother," called Kate, mischievously.

"Kate McLean, where are you going?"

"Kate suddenly laughed, long and hilariously. There was a silence.

"Kate McLean!" came up the icy syllables.

"Oh, the big competition in stoves has arrived at Princeton," said the girl with prim solemnity.

"In what?" inquired Mrs. McLean.

"Didn't you know about it?" the girl's voice was flowing upward. "Two range factories. Frances and Belle say," her smiling face appeared over the banisters, "that they bake biscuits and give them away."

"Kate!"

"Buttered," said Kate.

Mrs. McLean cast one withering glance up at her stepdaughter's snub nose. Then she moved majestically away.

"I have no sympathy with it!" she ejaculated.

If the truth be told, the only relish Baxter had found in that method of pushing his father's business was the relish of approaching Princeton. It was this that animated him as he swung across the state in a spring wagon with the range up behind and Tarsus beside him. Yet there was an element of the lark in this unique employment, storming villages, capturing whole populations by the gentle art of the oven.

But his methods had aroused emulation in his rivals. They, too, had begun to bake biscuits. There had been exciting races for certain towns, bitter defeats, hairbreadth victories. And now at last the representatives of Wilhite and Samson and those of Buck Brothers had descended on Princeton as birds of prey on a barnyard. The sample ranges had come booming in from country roads, mud flying, whips cracking.

Along the east side of the square came Kate, Frances on one arm and Belle on the other. It was a jolly afternoon with the sun shining, a season of the pleasant bustling of commonplaces. The streets were full of wagons and buggies. The grass in the court house yard was green.

Round Mr. Tindall's tin and stove shop at the square's southeast corner a crowd with tickled expressions of countenance craned their necks. Down on Broadway, two blocks distant, another crowd, equally tickled, jostled round the pregnant oven of Buck Brothers. Toward Tindall's came the three girls, like bright feathered creatures let out of an aviary, and little was Kate McLean dreaming what eye was about to meet hers.

"Now ladies and gentlemen," cried a clear and commanding voice at the door of Tindall's large warerooms, "walk right up and test these biscuits, please; just five minutes by the clock since my good friend Tarsus touched the match to the fire. I guarantee you the Wilhite and Samson range will bake biscuits in eighty-five seconds less than any other range in the world, and I'm ready to prove it.

"Tartus, give the lady a little more butter there. I see by the little girl's face, madam, that she likes it. It's almost as light and dainty as you are, little girl, I'll give you my word, but not quite. Don't crowd, gentlemen."

"Oh!" Kate McLean had said, and the ejaculation was long and mysterious. Yonder on the crossing she stopped.

"Come on," cried Frances, laughing and pulling at her sleeve. "I'm going to push right up there, girls, and get one of those biscuits."

"Oh, no!" cried Kate, crimsoning and drawing back. She could see his face over the crowd. He had never looked handsomer, never more amiably smiling, never with more of that dark red in his olive cheeks. And he seemed to be dressed for some afternoon fraternity function. Tarsus, a natty negro of the sleeping-car porter type, was serving hot biscuits with manners that would have adorned a French court.

"Why, Kate McLean, you're bashful!" taunted Belle.

"Lead on!" cried Kate, with sudden theatrics, her pretty lips set and her nose in the air.

In this order the three links in a bright chain went through the crowd; Frances' red shirt waist breaking the way, with farmers and farmers' wives, townspeople and their families, titillated of palate, falling back before her; Belle, a veil flying loose from her sailor hat, clinging to Frances' hand in front and Kate's behind; and Miss McLean, dressed in a bright blue waist and blue hat slanting up to a bunch of high violets, bringing up a half-reluctant rear, mischief in her black eyes.

"Ladies and gentlemen, the mechanism of theis range is so simple that a little dot of a girl could manage it." Baxter was fond of little girls. "Touch the knob so, and the patent opening descends. The draft enters here, so strong that a candle's flame is at once extinguished. Place your left hand here," he turned his face toward the crowd, "and you find that the damper—hm—the damper——"

The red in his cheeks deepened, and he halted. Not two yards away from him were the mischievous lips, the black eyes, the high violets. A gentle flood of pink, like a sunset in miniature, flowed softly over her face; she looked interested in his stove. Frances was nibbling a biscuit; Belle was gazing rapt at Baxter Wilhite and his college clothes.

"Ah—hm—I was saying something about the damper," he said.

And Kate without warning, laughed in the midst of the semi-stillness which his pause had occasioned; a soft, irrepressible, contagious and musical laughter. He lifted his hat and came forward, smiling and confused. The three girls and Baxter were the center of an admiring throng, who looked on with sedative approval, as they had looked at the biscuits. Tarsus was tossing in another panful and the range was roaring.

"Miss McLean," said Baxter, holding out his hand, "I am flattered to amuse you."

"Not at all," said she, turning a piquant face to him and, after allowing him to stand with his hand held out till a farmer tittered, she decided to favor him with her fingers.

"It was the biscuit that pleased me; let me introduce my friends."

They were standing on the sidewalk; the crowd seemed to think it very agreeable and munched away.

"Why, Mr. Wilhite! She didn't tell us she knew you!" said Frances, excited.

"I think the biscuit was grand!" said Belle.

"Kate McLean" came a sudden, shattering command from behind Baxter, who turned in a hurry.

There stood Kate's stepmother, that woman of strange disposition. Her large eyes were on the girl, condemnation in every feature. She was both tall and plump, with a fine figure elegantly clad.

"Kate," said she, "is this the place for a lady? Go home, shameless girl. Who is this person—some patent medicine man, I suppose?"

A spring wagon dashing up to the curb saved Baxter's dignity.

"Out with that other range, Tarsus!" cried he, red to the roots of his hair. Three men tossed a stove into the vehicle. Tarsus, having distributed his last pan of biscuits, sprang to the seat. "Ladies and gentlemen," cried Baxter, vainly endeavoring to be suave, "I'm going to Smithville to leave a deputy there and show that town the merits of this range. I'll be here all next week on this very spot, proud to show you the workings of the draft and damper, happy to give you another taste. Thank you—thank you."

He was on the seat.

"Mother!" Kate had cried, cut to the quick. The two women were hopelessly incompatible; but this was too much; her mother had insulted him. All her spirit came up; she tossed her head. The laughter of the crowd stung her, and, months of rebellion suddenly producing action, she swept by Mrs. McLean to the spring wagon, crimsoning and ashamed, but daring. The dignity of Wilhite's occupation had been assailed in public, and because of her. She turned her animated face up to him. Her mother was looking sternly on and the crowd became excited.

"Baxter," she said, "I promised to go driving with you. Aren't you going to take me?"

He was startled, also amused.

"Whenever you say," said he.

"Now," she replied, mischief coming back into her eyes, her lips still firm. "Give me your hand—I'll come up, if you please."

"But—this rig?" he stammered, feeling Mrs. McLean's unsympathetic eye consuming him as she stood apparently horrified.

"What?" said Kate, with fine hauteur, "you promised—and you refuse?" The trembling violets were on a level with his hand as he held the whip.

Continued on Page 8.